



ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

September 22, 2016

Ms. Marlene Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department's Support to Improve Wireless Emergency Alerts and Community-Initiated Alerting

Dear Secretary Dortch,

The City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department (EMD) is in full support of the recommendations which are being put forth by the New York City, Office of Emergency Management. In Los Angeles, EMD also employs the use of the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system through our program, Notify LA <http://emergency.lacity.org/notifyla>.

Our mission of situational awareness and being able to inform the public during times of emergencies, disasters and terrorist events means that we all need the most well designed and technically capable system possible. Therefore, we also recommend that the following rules be adopted:

1. **Use of Visual Embedded References:** WEA should be able to display photos and links in addition to text. This will allow for visual images to support text.
2. **Increased Efficiency in the use of Geo-targeting:** The WEA system should be able to send out messages to more targeted areas as opposed to a wider area which is not in an impact zone. For example, in Los Angeles we have communities near the ocean. If our intent is to warn those residents that there is an on-coming tsunami and the message goes out to the residents in our inland areas. It will not make sense because the people in the inland areas are not located near any bodies of water. We need to be able to send out more precise messaging to areas which are directly impacted by an incident instead of being forced to include the wider general population. The lack of this capability causes confusion and discredits the use of messaging in this form.
3. **Messaging in Languages other than English:** We have 3,971,896 people residing in Los Angeles 60% of which speak a language other than English at home. We MUST to be able to provide messaging to these folks in other languages in order to provide for greater public safety. We also recommend that WEA look at ways to provide messaging for people with disabilities.

4. **Ability to Access Crowd-sourced Data:** Use of crowd-sourced data allows emergency managers the ability to obtain situational awareness and assists us with developing response actions and plans. Having the ability to access this data is a tool for quicker situational awareness.

We support and recommend that the above mentioned enhancements be implemented by the Federal Communications Commission with **urgency** so that we as a City and as a Nation can provide for clearer, more direct and improved messaging in the interest of public safety.

The City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department appreciates your attention in this matter and would be available to consult further if needed.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



ARAM SAHAKIAN
General Manager

AS:mc

cc: Commissioner Joseph J. Esposito, New York City Emergency Management
Benjamin J Krakauer, Director of Watch Command, New York City Emergency Management